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ABSTRACT

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) believes that colleges and universities should play a central role in bringing the march to education reform to a successful conclusion. In this position paper, the Federation outlines a program to tackle the issues of standards, teaching, and accountability in education. For school reform to work, higher education must be a full partner. It is essential to develop policies under which colleges and universities make clear what entering students must know and be able to do and work with schools to ensure that the high school course of study and standards of achievement reinforce those needs. The first point is the formation of a partnership for higher standards and student achievement. This partnership will involve four steps related to K-12 partnerships, incorporation of higher education into the Goals 2000 process, curriculum collaboration, and raising the expectations of entering students at the college level. A second necessity is strengthening teacher education, and four steps are outlined to bring this about. Communication is the key to these efforts. A third requirement is enhancing college-level teaching and accountability through attention to counseling, college-level teaching, and goal-setting and accountability. The paper calls for new leadership roles for AFT affiliates in K-12 and higher education and increased technical assistance on the part of the national AFT Office for each of these three areas. Some specific details are given for each area. (SLD)

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CLOSING THE CIRCLE:

MAKING HIGHER EDUCATION A FULL PARTNER IN SYSTEMIC REFORM

American Federation of Teachers
College-School Task Force On Student Achievement

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"Institutions of higher education should be ***encouraged to enter into partnerships with schools*** to ***provide information and guidance to schools on the skills and knowledge graduates need in order to enter and successfully complete postsecondary education, and schools should provide information and guidance to institutions*** of ***higher education on the skills, knowledge and preservice training teachers need, and the types of professional development educators need in order to meet the purposes*** of ***this Act. "*** (Sec. 301, 12)

"The American *system of postsecondary education is foremost in the world in such system's achievement of both academic excellence and equity in access, but maintaining that preeminence requires renewed efforts to strengthen the quality of postsecondary education. Disappointing student* performance *on achievement* tests *and licensure examinations, declining rates of postsecondary education persistence and completion* among *minorities, and other troubling trends in the quality of postsecondary education should be addressed by the United States* as ***part*** of its ***overall*** drive to improve ***American*** education." (Sec. 93 1 (h)(1)(A))

Source: Goals 2000: Educate America Act

PL 103-227 (1994)

INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEXT OF REFORM

In a decade-long march, beginning with the publication of *A Nation At Risk* and continuing most recently with passage of the landmark "Goals 2000" legislation (PL 103-227), America has committed itself to bringing academic standards and student achievement in our public schools to world-class levels. That march to higher standards is, in fact, still in its infancy, as school systems and teachers across the country struggle to improve performance and overcome enormous financial, bureaucratic and attitudinal obstacles that stand in their way.

The American Federation of Teachers believes that the nation's colleges and universities should play a central role - a greater role than they have played thus far - in bringing the march to education reform to a successful conclusion.

Colleges and universities train our public school teachers and conduct the nation's research into teaching and learning. Through their admissions policies, colleges and universities exert a powerful influence on the content of the public school curriculum and on the courses taken by students who aspire to a college education. For school reform to work, higher education must become a full partner. For higher education to advance, the schools must become stronger.

STANDARDS AND ACCESS

We start with this principle: All citizens have a right to an education that carries them as far as their ambitions, talents and hard work will permit. Access topostsecondary education is an essential part of this right.

Since the Second World War, America has opened opportunities forpostsecondary education in an unprecedented way. We have created an array of public and private universities, four-year colleges, community colleges and technical institutions that offer innumerable courses of study. Government funds have become a basic underpinning of academic research. We have created federal programs that provide billions of dollars to help students pay for their education. And we have established college admission policies that offer access to students who have done well in school, students who have not done well, and adults who left school and want to return for further education.

Funding for higher education, admittedly, has not nearly kept pace with our ideals. But we cannot discount the outstanding commitment to postsecondary education that has been undertaken, or the millions of personal success stories and contributions to society that have grown out of that commitment.

At the same time, however, the policy of open access has had unintended consequences.

For example, less restrictive college admission policies reduce the incentive for public schools to develop a strong curriculum and set high standards, and may give students the message that pre-college success is unnecessary.

If colleges required students to successfully complete a challenging course of study before admission, the schools would be pushed hard to develop better programs and achieve better results because school officials and parents want their graduates to be admitted. Students should be motivated to achieve academic success in high school by the common sense expectation of what they need to succeed in college. But in the absence of recognized standards, the pressure just isn't there to put together a high school program that requires students to work hard and do well.

The inevitable result is that large numbers of students come to college unprepared to do college-level work. This is too often the case with minority students and students from low income backgrounds, who are frequently steered away from taking the kind of strong academic coursework in the arts and sciences that is the basis for success in college, or whose high schools do not offer the appropriate courses. But underpreparation is also widespread among students from all communities and economic levels.

To make up for this, colleges and universities have developed extensive and costly remedial programs in basic skills that should have been digested in high school. Some students succeed in these programs, but many others do not. As a result, college retention rates are far too low, as poorly-prepared students find it hard to persist and succeed in their education.

A PROGRAM TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

We need to find ways to correct for these unintended consequences. The solution is not to turn back the clock, not to run away from the commitment to opportunity and go back to exclusion and elitism. Instead, we need to develop policies under which colleges and universities make clear what entering students must know and be able to do, and work with the schools to ensure that the high school course of study and standards of achievement reinforce those needs. In this report, we will put forward a program that:

- Outlines a systemic K-16 approach to curriculum and standards;
- Brings together groups of faculty from higher education and K-12 to develop a more challenging high school curriculum and establish higher standards of performance;
- Commits ourselves as educators to teach to these high standards and give students the extra help they need to meet them; and
- Phases in higher college admission requirements, particularly for four-year colleges and universities.

Changes in admission policies should be undertaken in a coordinated way, involving all segments of higher education, and should be implemented gradually, over a period of years long enough to assure that the climb to higher standards does not have an unfair effect on particular groups of students.

Standards should differ to suit the mission of different types of institutions, but they must be challenging for all students. Standards for admission to flagship state universities need to be different from admission standards for other public four-year colleges, which, in turn, should differ from those of two-year colleges.

Two-year colleges, in particular, should continue to play their special role as open access institutions and as institutions to which adults can turn to re-enter the educational system. An appropriate period of college preparatory work, counseling and support services must be provided for such students until they are able to handle college-level work.

Other industrial countries are finding that they can expand access and raise standards at the same time, if they reach out and devote time and resources to helping students succeed. In France, for example, 47% of all students now take a set of examinations at least as challenging as an American advanced placement exam and 37% pass it. In the U.S., only 7% take the advance placement exam and only 4% pass. Europe is putting behind its old system of closed access, and now retention and graduation rates of students with four-year college degrees are equal to or higher than the United States.

In short, we must assure that access never means moving students into a pipeline programmed for failure. We have to develop policies which define access as moving students successfully through their education. Raising the level of achievement expected of high school students-- tying expectations to the reality of what students need to know and be able to do in college-- will foster, not impede, student access to a good education and their chances for success.

A PROGRAM TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Setting clear and challenging standards is a centerpiece of education reform. But high standards must be coupled with a program to nurture and support teaching at all levels.

Teacher education programs are a critical linchpin between higher education and better schools. We need to encourage the best teacher education models, and see that teacher education programs are no longer isolated within their own institutions and from the public schools.

But the need to support excellent teaching can not end at the elementary and secondary, education level. **Today, too little attention is given to encouraging effective teaching in college through strong staff development programs.**

Everyone recognizes that a good researcher needs to be well grounded in methodology, needs continual interchange with experienced colleagues, and needs to keep up with the latest studies and technology. This is just as true of good teachers. Yet, at most college campuses, insufficient resources are now directed toward this end.

Similarly, at many four-year colleges and universities, decisions about promotion, tenure and pay focus heavily on published research but undervalue demonstrated excellence in teaching and service. This is not to diminish the central role of academic research, which is critical to society at large and an essential adjunct to good teaching. But it is also true that reward systems that favor research over teaching and service can skew the energies of faculty and distort institutional goals.

Finally, we need to respond to the growing public call for accountability in higher education. This call for accountability is partly a reaction to finding constraints, and has sometimes been fanned by polemicists painting a false and mean-spirited portrait of colleges and college professors. But there is genuine concern as well, concern about student retention, about the "value-added" of a college education, about the balance between research and teaching, and other issues.

Unfortunately, solutions that are put forward in the public arena to address accountability too often boil down to mechanistic schemes to "measure outputs', such as fixed teaching loads or a national test of "higher order thinking skills." The problem is that solutions like these may detract from, rather than enhance, student learning.

The nature of higher education does not lend itself to quick-fix, uniform measures of achievement. Colleges and universities educate students to be philosophers, or lab technicians, or teachers or accountants. Some colleges and universities are focused heavily on teaching; others are supported in large measure because of the research they conduct, and all provide varying forms of service to the community.

It is time, then, for colleges and universities to actively embrace the idea of accountability, but in ways that make sense. We must design systems that set clear institutional goals and establish yardsticks for success and failure, but that also take into account the enormous variety of college students, institutions and educational goals.

OBSTACLES TO REFORM

The following pages outline our program to tackle the issues of standards, teaching and accountability. But even as we put this forward, we must acknowledge serious obstacles that lie in the path of reform.

The most critical, certainly, is insufficient funding. Across the country, appropriations for higher education have decreased as a proportion of state budgets even as the public demand grows for more and better teaching and student services. We want to make positive change, but it is a fantasy to imagine that higher standards, a more rigorous curriculum and better teaching will materialize without greater financial support. "Doing more with less" is sometimes possible, but it is a nostrum that people always seem to apply to professions or endeavors other than their own. In our own work, we all know that real accomplishment requires real resources.

Another obstacle to reform is the balkanization of responsibility in higher education. Many states have complex governing structures that make it extremely difficult to set and implement strong policies. Many administrators are more concerned with athletics and institutional self-aggrandizement than setting sensible goals related to student achievement. Politicians of all stripes have a tendency to embrace quick fixes and fads, and, when these don't work, to resort to another quick fix or name-calling. Regional accrediting agencies, which have little faculty union input, set one set of standards; state agencies set other standards; academic disciplinary organizations and specialized accrediting agencies set still others. Too few institutions in authority are willing to allow faculty to take the lead in devising and implementing reform strategies.

Resistance to change, inside as well as outside the academy, is still another obstacle to reform. So is the fact that colleges and universities are in competition with each other for students, and setting higher standards is not usually seen as enhancing a college's competitive position. No institution should be placed at a disadvantage for promoting academic excellence.

Faculty and staff unions at all levels should be found at the forefront of the reform effort. This College-School Task Force on Student Achievement, consisting of six AFT higher education leaders and three elementary and secondary education leaders, was formed to grapple with these issues. The task force met four times, reviewing background papers, hearing from experts in the field, and sharing experiences and insights with one another.

Out of our deliberations, we have developed the following set of **Policy Recommendations** and a **Call to Action for the Union.** We base these on our belief that high standards are not a way to weed people out, but a way to cultivate students so they can achieve to their full potential. By encouraging high standards and excellent teaching we can achieve both access and quality throughout the educational system.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Colleges and universities must establish a partnership with the schools to set high standards and promote student achievement, strengthen teacher education programs, and enhance college-level teaching and accountability. We offer the following recommendations to bring about positive change in each of these three areas.

FIRST: A Partnership for Higher Standards and Student Achievement

The task force proposes four steps to bring higher education into constructive involvement with the schools around standards and achievement.

1. Establish K-16 Partnerships between colleges and universities and their feeder school systems.
2. Incorporate higher education into the Goals 2000 process.
3. Bring public school and college faculty together to develop world-class curricula
4. and standards for high school students.
5. Raise admission standards to college degree-granting programs.

K-1 6 Partnerships

A **formal working partnership should be established at the statewide or community level between school systems and the colleges which serve most of their students.** The partnership would look at education from kindergarten through college on a continuing basis, and push rigorous curricula and clear standards throughout the system.

For many years, concerned colleges and universities have operated 'partnership' programs with particular schools, or groups of students. But these efforts are not enough. For real change to occur, educators at all levels in the community need to start talking frequently and candidly to each together. They need to look at education from kindergarten through college as a connected enterprise serving essentially one student body, and they need to collaborate on interlocking, system wide reforms to raise student achievement.

K-1 6 Partnerships should be inclusive, involving school and college administrators and sometimes government officials. But it is essential that faculty drive the process and be involved in every step of decisionmaking.

Goals 2000

The federal Goals 2000 legislation creates a number of state and community-level mechanisms for setting curriculum content and standards. The legislation provides for some college and university involvement, but without a strong push from higher education, that involvement will be marginal. The new Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) amendments also offer support for higher standards and strong assessments.

Colleges and universities need to learn the details of the Goals 2000 and ESEA process in their state and incorporate themselves into it at all points. They should be involved in planning the high school curriculum, and making clear to planners what college students need to know and be able to do to succeed.

But Goals 2000 does not mandate a standard-setting process for the college-bound curriculum nor does it mandate the kind of intimate involvement of higher education that is necessary for reform to succeed.

Therefore the task force calls for the consideration of new national legislation building on Goals 2000; it might be called the "Mobilize Higher Education for Goals 2000" Act. The Act would offer state incentive grants to bring colleges and universities together with school systems to:

- Institute K- 1 6 Partnerships;
- Develop challenging high school curricula backed by strong assessments;
- Establish high schools on college campuses jointly operated by a college and the public school system; and
- Develop coordinated college admissions policies to back up higher standards.

Curriculum Collaboration

Under the rubric of Goals 2000 or a K-16 Partnership, discipline-based groups of K12 and higher education faculty should be set to work together in a systematic way to establish new course requirements, course content and assessments that meet world-class academic standards.

In order to be successful in college, prospective college students should have competency in a variety of fields prior to admission to a college degree-granting program. They need to successfully complete a battery of rigorous courses that include those necessary as a foundation for academic success.

This process must begin before high school. For many, early intervention is needed to assure that students are prepared to handle challenging high schoolcoursework.

Once in high school, students need to pursue a program with strong academic content. Some school systems and colleges have begun phasing in new and higher expectations for high school students. Some are requiring that students take more courses in core subject areas, and are working to raise the subject matter content of those courses. Other systems are experimenting with interdisciplinary curricula. And some are changing their promotion systems to rely, not on "seat time" in particular courses, but on achieving specific competencies in key subjects.

Whatever type of system is adopted, it is crucial that thecoursework be genuinely challenging, the equal of thecoursework mastered by students in other industrial countries. Too often, our high schools have offered courses with a pre-college label but not pre-college content. The disciplinary groups that set curricula must make hard choices about course content, and not simply incorporate every potential subject and concept to satisfy all conceivable disciplinary interests.

Again, as in other countries, it is essential that the curriculum structure be backed by a strong system of student assessment. Without a strong assessment system backed by independent measures of achievement, no one can assure that completion of thecoursework represents real understanding of the material and that high performance is recognized and rewarded.

Raising Expectations of Entering Students

Colleges and universities should act together to insure that their enrollment policies are coordinated with the push for higher standards and create real incentives for students to take challenging coursework in high school. Again, this could be undertaken under the rubric of a K-1 6 Partnership, or an expanded Goals 2000, or independently.

Twenty-eight state higher education agencies recently reported in a survey by the State Higher Education Executive Officers that they are already re-examining their admissions requirements. Faculty must assure that the job is done right, by educators.

A successful effort to raise admission standards would have six components.

First, institutions within the state should develop new standards in coordination with each other, so they are not set in competition with one another for enrollments. This will require the cooperation and collaboration of state legislatures and other public officials. Once a coordinated set of standards is set, some mechanism-- either a voluntary state compact among institutions, or other governmental or private action-- may be needed to assure that institutions comply and do not take unfair advantage in an attempt to boost enrollment.

Second, admissions standards must take into account the differing missions of institutions, particularly the role of community colleges as access institutions.

Third, higher standards that are developed should be phased in over a substantial period of time, perhaps ten years, to assure that students from all educational, financial and ethnic backgrounds are not unfairly affected and to allow schools to do the restructuring and staff development necessary to enrich the academic program.

Fourth, an expansive program should be undertaken to provide extra help to students during the transition period to assure that they are able to meet the new standards.

Fifth, new expectations of students need to be backed by a strong system of student assessment. As more and more reliable assessment mechanisms are developed across the country, through the Goals 2000 process among others, institutions of higher education will be able to utilize external, content-based assessments on which to base admission decisions. These include advanced placement examinations, new state examinations, and the international baccalaureate.

Finally, "second chance" opportunities need to be provided for adults to re-enter the educational system. As noted earlier, two-year colleges, in particular, should continue to play their special role as open access institutions. An appropriate period of college preparatory work, counseling and support services must be provided for such students until they are able to handle college-level work.

SECOND: Strengthening Teacher Education

If improving the high school curriculum and raising expectations is the first priority to bringing colleges and universities into constructive involvement with K- 12, then teacher education is surely the second front.

The best models of teacher education need to be encouraged at all institutions.
These models emphasize:

- High entry standards;
- A strong component of classroom experience;
- A firm grounding in academic subject matter;
- A broad repertoire of pedagogical approaches and theories of learning; and
- A clear understanding of the role of schools in American society.

Professional development models should encourage higher education faculty to teach in the school system and school teachers to teach in colleges and universities, - and to share experiences and perspectives. Teacher education programs should also prepare teachers to work effectively with paraprofessionals and foster greater utilization of paraprofessionals in the educational process.

Forty-six state higher education agencies responding to a State Higher Education Executive Officers survey report that they are re-evaluating their teacher education programs. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education is moving to strengthen standards at the institutions they accredit. Actions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards will also have an effect.

These and other activities aimed at professionalizing teaching and assuring that teacher education programs accord with the needs of front-line teachers should be supported. The task force therefore recommends that colleges, universities and school systems take the following four steps.

1. Colleges and universities should establish a continual and intimate communication with their local school systems concerning the content of teacher education and professional development programs.

Teachers and their unions should be at the forefront of this effort, the dimensions of which would include:

- Assigning outstanding K- 1 2 teachers to consult with and teach at teacher training institutions;
- Bringing teacher education faculty to the schools, again to both consult and teach;
- Encouraging mentoring and internship programs, and professional practice schools;
- Making a special effort to hire teacher education faculty with a record of superior teaching performance at the K- 1 2 level;
- Assuring that the most accomplished teacher education faculty supervise student teaching; and
- Establishing advisory boards of K- 1 2 practitioners at teacher education institutions.

2. Steps should be taken to end the isolation of teacher education programs within their own institutions. College faculty across all disciplines should communicate more extensively, assure that the intellectual content of teacher education programs is equal to that of other academic programs, and make the pedagogical knowledge of teacher educators broadly available for use in college teaching.

3. **Colleges and universities should support organizations such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and other organizations when they work to establish high and consistent standards for the teaching**

profession and teacher education based on the principles outlined above. NCATE should increase its contact with K-12 teachers in evaluating teacher education programs.

4. Colleges and universities should actively seek funding for quality professional development activities under the Goals 2000 legislation, including wider teacher exchanges between elementary and secondary schools and higher education. It is particularly important now that classroom teachers receive increased training to teach to higher standards.

THIRD: Enhancing College-Level Teaching and Accountability

To improve student achievement once in college, the task force recommends that a series of steps must be taken to: (1) bolster undergraduate counselling; (2) strengthen and reward college and university teaching; and (3) establish effective goal-setting and accountability processes at higher education institutions.

Counselling

Programs should be initiated or strengthened at the collegiate level to require stronger diagnostic testing, mentoring, guidance and counselling so students can move in productive directions once they have been admitted. For access to be meaningful, good counselling is an essential adjunct to good teaching and high standards.

College-Level Teaching

Too little attention is given to staff development on most college campuses. Also, decisions about promotion, tenure and pay at many four-year colleges and universities require faculty to produce an extensive record of published research but do not place great value on teaching and service.

To address these concerns, the task force makes five recommendations.

1. **Colleges and universities should institute programs that provide some pedagogical training to teaching assistants and new faculty.** Such programs would offer:

- Greater training in effective teaching methods, pedagogy and classroom organization;
- Training in multiple strategies to meet the needs of individual reamers, including reamers with special needs;
- Training in using a variety of assessment techniques;
- Training in activist learning and apprenticeship models.

2. Mentoring between new and experienced faculty should be actively encouraged and mentors rewarded.

3. **Professional development opportunities for veteran faculty should be expanded to encourage continued pedagogical growth and opportunities for greater involvement in their disciplines.** These programs would offer:

- Training as effective mentors;
- Training in using a variety of new assessment techniques;
- Training in working with special needs students;
- Training in activist learning and apprenticeship models;
- Training in new information technologies inside and outside the libraries;
- Education in new learning theories and instructional strategies.

4. **Reward systems at most four-year colleges and universities should be made more flexible, allowing faculty to pursue, and seek advancement on the basis of their teaching and service as well as their published research.**

The appropriate mix of activities should depend on the institution's mission, and will vary among departments. Reward systems should be flexible enough to allow faculty to pursue different interests at different times in their careers.

In order to evaluate teaching performance as objectively as research, mechanisms should be encouraged to document good teaching, such as teaching portfolios, videotaped classes, peer and student evaluation, and review of course outlines and exams.

5. **A new national program should be created, as part of legislation connecting higher education and Goals 2000, which would allow colleges and universities to institute professional development activities as described above.**

Accountability

The task force recommends that a faculty-driven process be put into place at each college and university to examine the institution from top to bottom, set goals and establish clear measures of accountability for public review.

Such a process will have three elements.

1. **Goal-setting:** The objective of a collegial goal-setting process is to clarify the common purposes that may be submerged as institutions scramble for students, faculty and dollars. Each college and university must assure that:

- It has clearly understandable objectives;
- Knows what kinds of students it wants to attract, and what it hopes to have given them at the end of their education;
- Has a strong academic program;
- Sets high student expectations, and establishes strong mechanisms to assess student achievement; and
- Directs resources toward achieving its objectives.

There are dozens of ways to organize a goal-setting process. On a procedural level the key to success is to assure that faculty are on an equal footing with administrators; on a substantive level, the key to success is to assure that hard choices are faced rather than avoided.

2. Accountability yardsticks: Inappropriate forms of accountability will be inflicted as a "punishment" on higher education unless colleges and universities establish expectations for their own performance that make sense and are understood and accepted in the public arena. Once goals are set, administrators and faculty should agree on a set of indicators by which they are willing to be held accountable for success or failure in achieving their aims.

These can include indicators of student achievement such as test scores and grades, retention, and placement and job success; curriculum development; faculty contributions to community projects and economic growth; research awards; and any number of other quantitative and qualitative measures that are clear and pertinent to public aims.

3. Public engagement: Finally, in order to enjoy credibility and public support, each college and university should present for public response a clear exposition of its goals, programs and measures of success, along with periodic evaluations of progress.

A CALL TO ACTION FOR THE UNION

We noted at the outset that faculty and staff unions at all levels have an obligation to play a leadership role in promoting a partnership for high standards. Since unions are often the only organizations that link educators and staff throughout the educational system, they are in a unique position to foster this kind of cooperation. In addition, AFT has a special role to play concerning teacher education, as the union represents faculty at more teacher education institutions than any other organization. With that in mind, the task force offers the following call to action for AFT affiliates and the national AFT office.

A PARTNERSHIP FOR HIGHER STANDARDS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The TASK FORCE URGES AFT Affiliates in K-1 2 and Higher Education to:

1. Assume a new leadership role, that of bringing together school systems and colleges and universities to raise standards and student achievement.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Initiating a set of meetings with union counterparts in the two systems to discuss common problems and plan cooperative action;
- Convening meetings with administrators, state legislators and other public officials to secure their support for a faculty-driven reform agenda;
- Launching an effort to convene (or strengthen, where they exist) K- 1 6 partnerships to plan and monitor systemic change;
- Assuring active higher education participation in state and local planning activities under Goals 2000 and ESEA, and
- Facilitating collaboration between K- 1 2 and higher education faculty on a world-class high school curriculum and standards.

2. Continue to fight vigorously to secure funding for reform at the state and local level, and to assure that K-12 and higher education take united stands on funding issues.

3. Help establish or expand tutoring/mentoring programs that bring college students into the middle schools and high schools.

4. Spearhead efforts to raise four-year college admission standards in the manner described earlier.

THE TASK FORCE URGES the National AFT Office to:

1. Initiate a technical assistance effort to help K-12 and higher education affiliates begin K-16 partnerships and collaborate effectively on curriculum and standards.

This assistance could take a variety of forms, such as sponsoring a national conference or regional conferences, conducting workshops for interested affiliates, or fostering model programs, as well as preparing a handbook and offering expert advice to affiliates.

The American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) operates a program that provides technical assistance to communities in initiating what they call "K- 1 6 Councils." The aims of these councils parallel AFT goals in many respects, although the focus on faculty and admissions policy is not as pronounced. AAHE is most interested in having AFT support its initiative and has indicated a willingness to explore integrating the AFT agenda into the program. The task force recommends that AFT enter into discussions toward this end.

2. Assist higher education affiliates to become as involved as possible in the state planning teams and local district improvement teams mandated by Goals 2000, and in the law's national demonstration and community partnership programs.

3. Develop and promote national legislation building on Goals 2000 providing incentive grants to the states to institute standards partnerships as outlined earlier.

4. Redouble its national advocacy efforts, as well as technical assistance to affiliates, to increase education funding and make reform possible. In particular, the national office should expand efforts to help affiliates analyze budgets and launch legislative, political and media campaigns to increase state funding.

5. Insure that national regulations for federal programs dealing with standards and school-to-work transition require education faculty organizations to participate in all aspects of program planning and implementation.

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STRENGTHENING TEACHER EDUCATION

THE TASK FORCE URGES AFT Higher Education Affiliates to:

1. Strengthen their efforts to establish close contact with their colleagues in the public schools to assure that the content and implementation of teacher education and professional development programs serve the needs of classroom teachers.

Affiliates should initiate regularly scheduled professional roundtables between K-12 and higher education faculty, especially in cities where AFT represents faculty in both systems.

2. Use their good offices to bring together faculty from throughout the institution to alleviate the isolation of teacher education programs and to assure that the pedagogical expertise of teacher educators is made broadly available to the faculty.

3. Push to have their institution's teacher education programs accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, and work closely with NCATE on setting high standards.

4. Work to secure funding for teacher education initiatives through their state under Goals 2000.

THE TASK FORCE URGES the National AFT Office to:

1. Work with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and other organizations to ensure the establishment of high and consistent standards for the teaching profession and teacher education.

2. Advocate funding for Goals 2000 teacher education initiatives.

3. If funding is not made widely available to support these activities under Goals 2000, propose the creation of a separate funding authority to undertake them.

ENHANCING COLLEGE-LEVEL TEACHING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

THE TASK FORCE URGES AFT Higher Education Affiliates to:

1. Vigorously promote staff development activities in collective bargaining with employers.

For example, contracts may include provisions for training and orientation of new faculty, as well as a union role in mentoring and assisting faculty who need work in their teaching skills. Outstanding teaching awards may be provided for contractually, with winners agreeing to be videotaped and to assume mentor responsibilities to other faculty.

2. Work to ensure that effective teaching and service are sufficiently rewarded in institutional decisions concerning hiring, promotion, tenure and pay.

THE TASK FORCE URGES the National AFT Office to:

1. Publish a survey of existing contractual provisions and practices in the area of higher education staff development for use by higher education affiliates.

2. Strengthen its existing training and technical assistance program on effective teaching in higher education.

For example, the Educational Issues Department might develop more ER&D/effective teaching workshops and workshop materials targeted to a higher education audience, as well as handbooks on mentoring and postsecondary research. More sessions on effective teaching should also be offered at AFT Higher Education Department conferences.

3. Push for the creation of a new national program, as part of legislation connecting higher education and Goals 2000, -which would allow colleges and universities to institute a variety of professional development activities as described above.

4. Promote accountability on an institution-based model

AFT advocacy should be pursued in a variety of forums. At the federal level, it includes working with the U.S. Office of Postsecondary Education and the newly created National Institute for Postsecondary Education, as well as exploring ways to include institution-based accountability processes in proposed higher education/Goals 2000 legislation.

At the organizational level, it includes working with the National Education Association and the American Association of University Professors to develop joint statements and initiate cooperative activities related to accountability.

Finally, it includes working to induce the states and private accrediting agencies to support institution-driven accountability mechanisms in assessing institutional quality. In general, scrutiny by private accrediting agencies is preferable to stronger state controls on institutions. However, to enjoy this support, accrediting agencies must be open to union involvement in developing standards for institutional assessment and in conducting such assessments.

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